

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERN 01335 230853Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 EB-08 FRB-03
INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15
STR-07 USIE-00 /075 W
-----099496 230858Z /14

O 230700Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5975
USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BERN 1335

EO 11652: N/A DECONTROL AFTER AUG 1, 1978
TAGS: EIND, ELAB, EINV, SZ
SUBJ: FIRESTONE ANNOUNCES CLOSURE OF SWISS SUBSIDIARY

1. JOHN R. THOMPSON, MANAGING DIR, FIRESTONE SCHEWIZ
(AG), A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF FIRESTONE TIRE
AND RUBBER CO, TELEPHONED MAR 22 TO INFORM AMB
THAT PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT HAD JUST BEEN DISTRIBUTED
MAKING PUBLIC PLANNED CLOSURE OF FIRESTONE PRODUCTION
FACILITY AT PRATTELN, NEAR BASEL. FIRESTONE'S
AFFILIATION WITH PRATTELN FACILITY DATES BACK NEARLY
40 YEARS.

2. PLANT CURRENTLY EMPLOYS ABOUT 600. PRECISE
DATE FOR CLOSURE NOT YET SELECTED BUT PROBABLY WILL
BE NEAR END OF JULY 1978. WORK FORCE, UPON BEING
INFORMED OF DECISION MORNING OF MAR 22 PROMPTLY
WALKED OFF JOB, SAYING THEY WOULD RETURN TUES,
MAR 28 (MAR 24 AND 27 ARE SWISS HOLIDAYS).

3. THOMPSON SAID LOCAL AND CANTONAL AUTHORITIES
EXPRESSED SHOCK WHEN HE CALLED ON THEM TO INFORM
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PAGE 02 BERN 01335 230853Z

THEM OF DECISION. INITIAL REACTION WAS THAT THEY
WOULD "PROTEST" TO SWISS FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AS WELL
AS TO USG. THOMPSON TOLD LOCAL AND CANTONAL OFFICIALS
IN RESPONSE THEIR REQUEST THAT HE WILLING TO BE
PRESENT IF THEY HAVE MEETING WEEK OF MAR 28 WITH
SWISS FEDERAL OFFICIALS.

4. THOMPSON STATES PRESS RELEASE WILL ATTRIBUTE CLOSURE TO "ECONOMIC CONDITIONS" WHICH HE FURTHER DEFINED ON TELEPHONE AS HIGH COST OF PRODUCTION IN SWITZERLAND AND COMPETITION FROM IMPORTS. EXPORT OF TIRES FROM SWITZERLAND CASED TO BE COMMERCIALY VIABLE PROPOSITION SEVERAL YEARS AGO.

5. FIRESTONE PLANS RETAIN MARKETING AND SALES FORCE FOR SWITZERLAND WHICH CURRENTLY NUMBERS ABOUT 200.
WARNER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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